

SOURCES SOUGHT / REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

Solicitation Number: 89303320REM000077

Title: Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Operations Acquisition

Date: July 16, 2020

THIS IS NOT A REQUEST FOR QUOTE OR PROPOSAL. THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY.

No solicitation is available. This RFI is released pursuant to Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) 15.201(e), Exchanges with Industry, and is issued for the purpose of conducting market research.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center (EMCBC) is currently in the acquisition planning phase for a potential upcoming procurement(s) to provide services at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) and to implement the DOE's National Transuranic Waste Program (NTP) among other requirements at the WIPP site. The majority of this work will be conducted at Carlsbad, New Mexico, the WIPP Site located approximately 32 miles from Carlsbad, and at various DOE generator sites. The WIPP site was constructed in the 1980's for disposal of defense-generated transuranic (TRU) waste. The underground repository is carved out of a 2,000-foot-thick salt bed formed 250 million years ago. WIPP is a 2,150 feet deep geologic repository for permanent disposal of a specific type of waste that is the byproduct of the nation's nuclear defense program. WIPP is the nation's only repository for the disposal of nuclear waste known as TRU, waste. Waste from DOE sites around the country is sent to WIPP for permanent disposal.

This RFI solicits input via capability statements from potential Offerors that have specialized capabilities necessary to meet all of the major elements of scope for the upcoming competitive procurement. Within these capability statements, DOE is seeking feedback from Offerors and other interested parties regarding possible alternative approaches for the major elements of scope, as well as insight into potential contracting alternatives without affecting safety and achieving steady-state operations. DOE will use the results of this market research to identify interested and capable sources and develop its acquisition strategy. Key market research goals include identifying and minimizing barriers to competition, evaluating small-business capabilities, and identifying risks. The number of procurements, contract type, period of performance, and small-business set-aside possibilities will be determined through the acquisition planning process. This RFI is part of the market research phase for the procurement to replace the current WIPP Management and Operating (M&O) contract, DE-EM0001971, with Nuclear Waste Partnership, LLC.

Due to the preliminary stage of this planning activity, there is no Performance Work Statement available at this time. The major elements of scope are identified in Attachment 1- "Major Elements of Scope".

The DOE EMCBC created a procurement website where additional information will be provided which may be viewed at <https://www.emcbc.doe.gov/seb/WIPPcontract/>. Information posted on the EMCBC website will be updated as it becomes available; therefore, interested parties should continuously monitor the EMCBC website for additional information. DOE will not respond to or post on the EMCBC website any verbal or written questions or comments pertaining to this RFI package. However, the comments will help inform what is ultimately included in DOE's acquisition plan and any requests for proposal that may be issued for this requirement.

DOE will determine whether or not the requirements can be set-aside for small businesses, 8(a) small businesses, small disadvantaged businesses, economically disadvantaged women-owned small businesses, women-owned small businesses, HUBZone small businesses, veteran-owned small businesses, or service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses and/or what small business program subcontracting opportunities exist, to enable development of appropriate small business program requirements. Small businesses, believing that they have the capability to perform all or a portion of the major elements of scope, are encouraged to demonstrate such capabilities by submitting a capability statement in accordance with the instructions below. Information provided in response to this RFI will also help shape small business subcontracting requirements if a small business set-aside is not feasible. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code for this requirement is 562211, Hazardous Waste Treatment and Disposal, with a size standard of \$41.5M.

All interested parties are hereby invited to submit a capability statement of no more than 15 pages, and no smaller than 12 point font. Also, electronic file submissions must be less than 20 Megabytes. The Government will evaluate each capability statement based on the interested parties' (and that of teaming partners when applicable) demonstrated qualifications, capabilities, expertise and past performance in each of the major elements of scope and areas of interest and expertise. More specifically, capability statements should include the following information as appropriate and as applicable:

- 1) Describe your ability and approach to performing all of the major elements of scope. Identify no more than three DOE, other Government, and/or commercial contracts relevant to the work of this sources sought within the past three years [include contract number, role in the effort (i.e., prime contractor or subcontractor), period of performance, dollar value of the work performed, scope, client, and contracting agency contact information].
- 2) Due to the mining operations experience necessary to safely maintain, operate and develop the underground disposal facilities to provide newly mined disposal panels, please describe your relevant work associated with underground mining operations. In addition to the information provided in Item 1 above, you may identify one additional contract specific to underground mining within the guidelines listed in question 1 for a total of no more than four contracts.
- 3) Describe your company and/or teaming arrangement's relevant work managing and integrating all the Major Elements of Scope. Also, describe your relevant work and approach to cost effectively manage and integrate the work of Teaming

Subcontractors who would perform specialty functions such as capital asset projects and perform core functions such as safety, security, etc.

- 4) Identify any technical challenges and risks in meeting the major elements of scope. Identify how your organization would maximize the probability of successful performance. DOE is interested in ways to further strengthen the site culture while accomplishing work safely.
- 5) Describe your ability to obtain the expertise and experience in sponsorship, management and administration of legacy pension plans and other benefit plans including Defined Contribution Plan, Post-Retirement Benefits Plan, health and welfare benefit plans and severance. Discuss your company's and/or teaming arrangement's experience in managing a union-represented workforce and labor-management relations and resolving any past labor disputes.
- 6) DOE is seeking solutions to creating an operations culture while accomplishing work safely and executing National TRU activities while improving efficiencies. Provide input and rationale to DOE on alternate approaches which could be effectively implemented to realize cost efficiencies, the optimal period of performance and contracting approach for the prospective procurement, including contract type, fee structure, optimal period of performance/timelines, key assumptions, and any risks and/or challenges that should be considered in the solicitation. Identify and describe any areas listed in the Attachment believed to be missing or in need of clarification.
- 7) Identify any Organizational Conflicts of Interest (OCI) concerns and/or potential OCI's that you or your teaming partners may have pertaining to the work described in this RFI.

Interested parties are requested to provide the name of the firm, or firms if a teaming arrangement, as defined in FAR 9.601(1), is being contemplated, socio-economic status, point of contact, phone number, address of firm, DUNS number, and/or CAGE code used over the past five years for the prime and each contemplated teaming partner. All teams shall identify the socio-economic status of each member and shall provide the capabilities of each member, as well as a description of the work that each member would perform under a contract. Identify as one or more of the following under NAICS code 562211, Hazardous Waste Treatment and Disposal: 1) small business; 2) 8(a) business (including graduation date); 3) HUBZone small business; 4) small disadvantaged business; 5) woman-owned small business; 6) economically disadvantaged women-owned small businesses 7) service-disabled, veteran-owned small business; 8) veteran-owned small businesses or 9) large business.

DOE reserves the right to use any and all information submitted by, or obtained from, an interested party in any manner DOE determines is appropriate, including, but not limited to, the creation of a competitive solicitation. An interested party should avoid including any classified, business confidential, and/or proprietary information in its response.

The Government will not pay for any information that is provided in response to this announcement nor will it compensate any respondents for the development of such

information. All capability statements and questions pertaining to this announcement shall be submitted electronically to WIPPcontract@emcbc.doe.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on August 5, 2020. DOE may not respond to or post on the EMCBC website any verbal or written questions or comments pertaining to this RFI. DOE personnel may contact firms responding to this announcement to clarify a responder's capabilities and other matters as part of this market research process.

THIS RFI IS NOT A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) AND SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED AS A COMMITMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT TO AWARD A CONTRACT.

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Attachment 1- Major Elements of Scope

The Contractor shall furnish all personnel, facilities, equipment, material, supplies, and services and otherwise do all things necessary for, or incident to, the performance requirements to support the Carlsbad Field Office mission to safely, compliantly, and efficiently characterize, certify, transport, and permanently dispose of defense-related transuranic (TRU) waste. To accomplish this mission, the Contractor will implement the activities in support of the National TRU Program (NTP) to characterize and certify the TRU waste at the TRU waste generator/storage sites, and facilitate the transportation of TRU waste to the disposal facility. In addition, the Contractor will implement specialized requirements of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), a nuclear and hazardous waste facility with systems, structures and components on the surface operated for receiving, unloading and downloading the waste to a deep (2,150 feet) underground salt mine used for TRU waste disposal. The major elements of scope associated with these activities are as follows:

NATIONAL TRANSURANIC WASTE PROGRAM

- **TRU Waste Integration at TRU Waste Generator/Storage Sites**

Integration of TRU waste inventory, characterization, certification, shipment loading, remediation, packaging/repackaging and retrieval at designated TRU waste generator/storage sites with DOE Contractors and other organizations at those facilities. The Contractor shall have the capability to implement information security (such as classification officers and derivative classifiers) associated with some of the TRU waste characterization/certification activities.

- **Transportation Packaging**

Maintain NRC-certified packaging (TRUPACT-II, TRUPACT-III, HalfPACT, 10-160B and 72-B cask) and DOT 7A Type A containers and records for packaging fabrication and maintenance. Fabricate additional NRC-certified packaging as needed to support future TRU waste transportation needs.

- **Transportation Management**

Coordinate an integrated approach with transportation Contractor(s) for transportation of TRU waste between TRU waste generator/storage sites and WIPP, including scheduling and dispatching shipments, coordinating empty shipments, and providing for non-routine maintenance on transportation trailers and transportation packaging.

- **Institutional Affairs**

Provide support to DOE in communicating with stakeholders along shipping corridors. Provide training to regional groups for emergency response and inspections for WIPP shipments through their regions.

WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT OPERATIONS

- **Transuranic Waste Operations**

Manage, operate, maintain, repair and replace WIPP waste handling facilities, systems, and equipment to receive, handle, and download contact-handled (CH - < 200 mrem/hour surface dose rate) and remote-handled (RH - \geq 200 mrem/hour surface dose rate) TRU waste and dispose of the TRU waste in the WIPP underground.

- **Mining/Ground Control Operations**

Manage operations and maintenance of the existing mined portions of the WIPP underground through ground control activities for safe operations. In addition, the Contractor shall plan, design, schedule, and perform the mining of access drifts and new underground waste disposal panels, as authorized, on a “just-in-time” basis before each active underground waste panel is filled. Waste disposal panels will continue to be mined, as authorized, to provide waste disposal space to allow TRU waste disposal up to the disposal capacity limits specified in the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act.

- **Facility Operations**

Manage, operate, maintain, repair and replace all other facilities, systems, and equipment (to include, but not limited to, electrical distribution, ventilation systems, water distribution, hoisting, compressed air, fire detection/alarm/suppression systems, and communications) to support the TRU waste operations and mining/ground control operations described above.

- **General Plant Projects, Maintenance and Improvement Projects, and other projects**

Manage and complete projects to address WIPP facility and National TRU Waste Program aging and degraded structures, systems and equipment needs for long-term operations.

- **Infrastructure Planning**

- Maintain an integrated infrastructure program;
 - Disposition excess facilities, structures, and equipment;
 - Land Management, Facility Planning and Disposition; and
 - Maintain the Configuration Management System.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

- Environmental Health, Safety, and Quality Assurance;
 - Comply with 10 CFR 830, Nuclear Safety Management, develop and implement a Nuclear Criticality Safety (NCS) Program/Procedure compliant with DOE O 420.1C
 - Worker Safety and Health Program in accordance with Worker Safety and Health Program 10 CFR 851
 - Chronic Beryllium Disease Prevention Program consistent with 10 CFR 850
 - Ensure adequate access to health programs/ambulatory care, and beryllium and radiation worker health surveillance programs.
 - Medical screening of employees required to enter controlled work areas and meet the requirements of 10 CFR 851 and/or Radiological Protection Program (10 CFR 835)
 - Integrated Safety Management System (ISMS) Program, including Integration of Environment, Safety, and Health into Work Planning and Execution.

- Radiation Protection Program (RPP) compliant with the requirements in 10 CFR 835 and DOE Order 458.1
 - Quality Assurance program compliant with 40 CFR 194, ASME NQA-1, and DOE O 414.1
- Business Services
 - Legal Services
 - Audit Services
 - Business Systems Management
 - Human Resources
 - Development of Recent College or Trade School Graduates
 - Program Management
 - Property Management
 - Information Resources Management
 - Maintain modernization and configuration of IT systems that meet DOE requirements for Cyber Security.
 - Record Management
 - Financial Management
 - Procurement in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and the DOE Acquisition Regulations (DEAR)
 - Industrial Relations
- Project Management with Integrated Contractor Work Control Systems and Reporting Requirements, DOE Order (O) 413.3B and FAR 52.234-4, Earned Value Management System (May 2014).
- Training program in accordance with DOE Order 426.2.
- Safeguards and Security compliant with applicable DOE requirements;
- Regulator and Stakeholder Interface
 - Manage a formal communication program to support WIPP and its regulators in public processes for WIPP-specific regulatory actions. Regularly communicate and provide information to the public and community groups interested in WIPP and decisions made on WIPP. Provide DOE Headquarters and Congressional Staff support with WIPP information to inform major decisions impacting WIPP and DOE Environmental Management's strategic goals related to TRU waste.
- Underground Experimental Support; and
- Environmental Protection and Regulatory Compliance compliant with applicable RCRA regulations, 40 CFR 191, and 40 CFR 194.
- Community Program for Regional Higher Education Teaming
 - Teaming with regional higher education institutions to develop regional technical talent in areas of radiation protection, radioactive waste management, mine operations, and standard trades.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D) PROGRAMS

- **R&D for Program and Operational Efficiencies**

Propose research and development initiatives that have the objective of improving the operational efficiency of the WIPP and the National TRU Program.

- **Other Experimental Programs**

Assist with experiments and demonstrations in support of TRU waste disposal and other programs.

- **Applied Development**

Address issues under applied development as directed by CBFO.

- **International Repository Science**

Support DOE in the development and maintenance of an International Repository Science Program as directed by the CBFO, including conducting research at the WIPP facility, tours, presentations and the hosting of meetings and workshops.

PROJECTS

Execute projects in accordance with DOE Order 413.3B, if applicable, which may include but not be limited to the following:

- **Safety Significant Confinement Ventilation System (Capital Asset Project [CAP] 15-D-411) and Utility Shaft (CAP 15-D-412)**

Complete construction of and turn over to operations a new underground ventilation system to replace the existing underground ventilation system which consists of two separate CAPs (i.e., Safety Significant Confinement Ventilation System and Utility Shaft) to facilitate concurrent waste emplacement, mining, and underground maintenance operations.

- **Hoisting Capability (CAP 21-D-401)**

Design, construct, install, and turn over to operations the hoisting capability inside the Utility Shaft to provide additional hoisting for mined salt, equipment, and personnel from the WIPP above-ground facility to the underground facility.

- **Modernization (Multiple Potential Future Projects)**

Plan, develop, and install modernized structures, systems, equipment, and processes to improve the safety and efficiency of mining, hoisting, TRU waste characterization, certification, transportation, and disposal.